

2008 Farm Bill Horticulture and Organic Agriculture Title: Providing New Resources for Fruit and Vegetable Producers

- **Expands access to locally grown food**

- Expands activities covered under the Farmers' Market Promotion Program, including the expansion of EBT systems at farmers markets
- Provides \$33 million to expand opportunities for direct producer-to-consumer marketing.
- Expands producers' eligibility to access funds in the program
 - The Farmers' Market Promotion Program provides competitive grants to improve and expand farmers markets, roadside stands, community-supported agriculture programs, and other direct producer-to-consumer market opportunities.
- Establishes the Healthy Urban Food Enterprise Development Center and provides \$3 million to help bring fresh foods into urban food deserts

- **Provides new funding to support organic farmers**

- Provides \$22 million for USDA's cost-share program
- Provides \$5 million for organic marketing data collection and publication
 - The USDA's National Organic Certification Cost-Share Program defrays the costs that producers and handlers incur when seeking organic certification

- **Helps fruit and vegetable producers address food safety, pest and disease management issues**

- Provides \$377 million over 10 years for pest and disease detection and control
- Directs USDA to develop assessments and establish priorities to combat pest and disease threats
- Provides money and outlines a plan for new programs of joint action between Federal and State governments to provide for early detection and surveillance of plant pests and diseases
- Establishes proactive, cooperative, audit-based certification systems between USDA, States, and growers to address plant pest infestations
- Research title (Title VII) provision offers fruit and vegetable producers a new tool for cooperating in efforts to fight food-borne illness through a \$23 million set-aside in the specialty crop research initiative for research on food safety hazards

Horticulture and Organic Agriculture Title Facts:

- The 2008 Farm Bill is the first farm bill to include a title for fruit and vegetable production

- Sales of fruits, vegetable, and tree nuts account for almost one-third of all crop cash receipts in the United States.

- Nearly every state in America has dedicated commercial specialty crop production

- The USDA's National Organic Program regulates the standards for any farm, harvesting or handling operation that wants to sell a product as organically produced

- Honeybees are the most economically valuable pollinators of farm crops in the world, contributing to the production of fruits, vegetables, nuts, and forage crops. Bee pollination of agricultural crops is said to account for one-third of the American diet

- **Continues support for Beekeepers and prioritizes research on Colony Collapse Disorder**
 - Supports beekeepers by extending the honey marketing loan.
 - Honey prices are supported through marketing loans in Title I that provide interim financing and additional income support if market prices fall below 69 cents per pound.
 - Creates a high-priority research area to continue research to identify causes and solutions to address Colony Collapse Disorder in honey bees and authorizes \$10 million per year for research related to colony collapse disorder and pollinator issues
 - Colony collapse disorder (CCD) is characterized by the sudden die-off of honey bee colonies. The cause of CCD has not been determined and is a cause of concern for beekeepers and farmers who rely on bees to pollinate their crops

- **Funds the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program**
 - Provides \$466 million over 10 years to expand the specialty crop block grant program
 - The block grants are provided to states to support projects in research, marketing, education, pest and disease management, production, and food safety

- **Establishes and funds a National Clean Plant Network**
 - Provides \$20 million to establish and operate the National Clean Plant Network
 - Develops a national source for clean plant stocks for horticultural crops
 - The program would help maintain plant stocks that are free from pests and diseases